

abuses. As John Fund put it in the Wall Street Journal, "The new Democratic Congress has finally found a government agency whose budget it wants to cut: an obscure Labor Department office that monitors the compliance of unions with federal law."

Allow me to quote Mr. Fund at some length:

In the past six years, the Office of Labor Management Standards, or OLMS, has helped secure the convictions of 775 corrupt union officials and court-ordered restitution to union members of over \$70 million in dues. The House is set to vote Thursday on a proposal to chop 20% from the OLMS budget. Every other Labor Department enforcement agency is due for a budget increase, and overall the Congress has added \$935 million to the Bush administration's budget request for Labor. The only office the Democrats want to cut back is the one engaged in union oversight . . . GOP Rep. John Kline of Minnesota will offer an amendment Thursday to restore \$3 million of the \$11 million planned cutback in OLMS's budget, so its budget would merely be restored to its 2007 level. Whatever sums are spent on union disclosure reports appear to be a good investment. Unions held \$22 billion in assets in 2005, and you'd think that a modest enforcement budget, representing less than 0.003% of that amount shouldn't be the only target for cuts by budget appropriators.

Madam Speaker, allowing workers to determine whether or not they wish to join unions is consistent with the American principle of personal freedom and self-determination. A Federal law concerning public sector union membership that would render State laws irrelevant is unconstitutional, reckless, and unnecessary. And reducing funding for the one Federal agency that pursues notorious union corruption is incomprehensible in its own right—but especially coming from a new majority that heralds its own allegiance to the highest ethical standards.

These things must not be allowed. These are matters of "liberty and justice for all" we must not take lightly.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 607–629 I was absent. I would like the RECORD to show that, had I been present, I would have voted as follows: 607—"no"; 608—"no"; 609—"yes"; 610—"yes"; 611—"yes"; 612—"yes"; 613—"yes"; 614—"yes"; 615—"no"; 616—"yes"; 617—"yes"; 618—"yes"; 619—"yes"; 620—"no"; 621—"no"; 622—"no"; 623—"no"; 624—"no"; 625—"no"; 626—"no"; 627—"yes"; 628—"yes"; 629—"yes."

PROMOTING AMERICAN AGRICULTURAL AND MEDICAL EXPORTS TO CUBA ACT OF 2007

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues in Congress to lend sup-

port to The Promoting American Agricultural and Medical Exports to Cuba Act of 2007 (H.R. 2819). This bill addresses several important issues related to our relationship with Cuba and is intended to remove obstacles to legitimate transactions.

First, it removes pre-payment requirement for U.S. agricultural exports to Cuba. It also allows for direct payments to U.S. banks for purchases by Cuba, instead of third-country banks. From 2000 to 2004, American agricultural producers were allowed to embark on a trading relationship with Cuba. During the 4 year period, agricultural trade with Cuba grew from nothing to being a \$380 million dollar trading industry. However through sanctions placed by the administration, this lucrative trading relationship was terminated after the administration placed barriers. Our American agricultural producers have potential to gain much-needed sales revenue in the Cuban market. Our agricultural sector has recently experienced declining sales numbers. Cuba, a new trading partner, will be a good customer and revitalize this area. It seems illogical that while other nations are taking advantage of this lucrative trading opportunity, the administration is denying us access to this opportunity. This bill is about America's right to prosper by participating and competing in international trade.

This legislation provides for the lift of the travel ban and also for the expedited issuance of U.S. visas for Cubans involved in agricultural purchases. As Americans, we pride ourselves on how our liberties are protected and respected by our government. However, banning American citizens to travel to Cuba is a blatant infringement on our democratic freedom to travel without restrictions. It is not appropriate for the government to prevent citizens to visit Cuba. Also, Cuban Americans should have the right to visit their native country without limitations placed on them. Scholars, architects, travelers and students should have an opportunity for cultural exchanges with Cuba.

Another provision included in the bill would eliminate on-site verification requirements for U.S. medicines and medical supplies, which currently is a major impediment on sales. This restriction makes the process of exporting medical goods more costly and difficult.

This act would recognize certain Cuban trademarks, while protecting U.S. trademarks there, by repealing Section 211 of the FY 1999 Omnibus Appropriations Act, which bars U.S. courts from hearing claims by foreign nationals asserting rights to trademarks similar to or associated with expropriated property. Section 211 currently violates the regulations of the World Trade Organization. Cuba has recently threatened to not uphold trademark protection for American companies because of the unfair balance between our country and theirs.

Finally, it also provides proceeds to fund an agricultural export promotion program for agricultural export promotion activities with respect to Cuba during a 5 year period. It is imperative that we find new markets to income opportunities for our farming community; therefore, this bill provides for support of an Agricultural Export Promotion Program with respect to Cuba to be administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This bill would allow us to achieve this.

It is time to depart from our flawed foreign policy on Cuba and normalize our relations

with this nation. I strongly urge you to join me in Promoting the American Agricultural and Medical Exports to Cuba Act in 2007.

TRIBUTE TO THE 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARIN COMMUNITY CLINIC

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the 35th anniversary of the Marin Community Clinic. The Marin Community Clinic has consistently provided high quality primary care to the residents of the community since 1972. Originally established as a free clinic in a Mill Valley Community Church, Marin Community Clinic has grown to become a federally qualified health center serving as a critical source of health care for all residents across Marin County who cannot afford medical insurance.

Throughout my district and across the Nation, the need for health care services among low income and uninsured residents continues to grow. Many residents who cannot afford care turn to hospital emergency rooms as their only health care option. Not only does this fail to meet the needs of patients, it also dramatically increases the costs of health care for everyone. Designed to offer a more cost-effective and affordable option than emergency rooms for non-emergency care, Marin Community Clinic receives at least 5–15 referrals from hospitals every day.

Marin Community Clinic also serves as a medical home to over 13,000 patients each year, 95 percent of whom live within 200 percent of the Federal poverty level. Between 1991 and 2007, patient visits have increased from 5,000 to nearly 50,000 annually, representing a 9-fold increase. Currently, 75 percent of the Clinic's patients are women and children. Today, Marin Community Clinic operates one clinic on the grounds of Marin General Hospital in Greenbrae and another clinic in Novato for residents of northern Marin. Next year, the organization plans to open a third clinic in San Rafael to respond to the growing community need for health care and dental services in the community.

As the clinic has grown, the organization has also developed a unique model of care that integrates physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, mental health clinicians, and case workers to deliver high quality, compassionate care. In addition, Marin Community Clinic also provides preventive health education for early breast cancer detection and for patients with chronic conditions like asthma, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Marin Community Clinic also operates a "Reach Out and Read" literacy program for children.

I commend Marin Community Clinic for their dedication, commitment and outstanding service for the citizens of Marin County during the last 35 years and I look forward to their continued success in meeting the health care needs with quality care for many more years to come.